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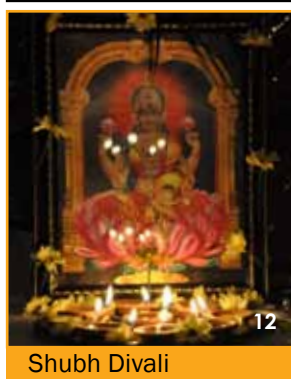
50 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

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THE PRESIDENT'S INDEPENDENCE DAY ADDRESS TO THE NATION REMARKS MADE AT THE NATIONAL AWARDS CEREMONY ON 31ST AUGUST, 2012 AT QUEEN'S HALL - THE YEAR AHEAD

This is the tenth year and final year that I have the privilege, ex officio, as Chancellor of the Order of the Trinity, recently changed to Order of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago of hosting this National Awards Ceremony.

In this capacity, I have had opportunity for better insight into the things that people do in service of their compatriots, their exploits at home and abroad and their accomplishments that speak of a quality that defines us, the people of Trinidad and Tobago.

The recipient of these awards represent themselves, but they also represent a large number of persons who will never be known beyond their own communities. I heartily congratulate all who have received awards this evening and thank them for the service that they have given in the respective fields that characterize these Awards. Mindful of the unsung heroes, so to speak, I take this opportunity to say thank you to them as well and, in doing so, I am sure that I speak on behalf of the several communities in which the labour and on behalf of the national community also.

I think it is a good thing to consider the meaning of these honours. The Letters Patent of 1969 established the "Distinguished Society of Trinidad and Tobago" and perhaps we might ponder what it is for. I have no doubt that opinions vary, in this regard, but of one thing, I am certain – these awards should



be understood to be and should proclaim recognition by the people of Trinidad and Tobago of the contribution of their fellow citizens to human development, at home and abroad. In other words, it is recognition of the people, by the people, the nominating agents.

I want to thank the people of this country who take the trouble to be a part of this exercise of discovering and pointing out the work that is being done, by those who choose to live

beyond self, many of whom do not put a monetary value on service, neither do they seek the honours. I thank, also, the Chairman and Members of the

National Awards Committee, whose task is not an easy one, in part, because, generally, there is not a clear understanding of the process, which can be fixed by increased public education. I thank them for their devotion to duty, throughout the years.

In closing, I thank the artistes who have added tremendously to our enjoyment this evening and wish them well in the further development of their talents. I thank as well the designer, the stage crew and the technical team, without whom the show cannot go on. And most importantly, my wife and I thank you all, honoured guests, for accepting our invitation to be here this evening.

I wish you all well.

May God bless our Nation!



Her Excellency Dr Jean Ramjohn-Richards congratulates Keshorn Walcott at the National Awards Ceremony, where he received the Order of Trinidad and Tobago.

GOLDEN JUBILEE MESSAGE FROM THE HONOURABLE KAMLA PERSAD-BISSESSAR, PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO TO OVERSEAS MISSIONS

Fellow nationals of Trinidad and Tobago, this year we proudly commemorate our Golden Jubilee of Independence – fifty years of triumph and transformation, which have brought maturity and wisdom to our young Nation.

While many of you may have left our shores several years ago, I know that in heart and spirit you join us in Trinidad and Tobago to observe this momentous occasion.

I know from my own experience abroad that when such national events occur the connection to home is even stronger. That is when you fully understand that you are never separated from the land of your birth, the land that shaped your unique identity.

On this day of our 50th Anniversary of Independence, as we stand together, at home and abroad - one people, one Nation - to celebrate this milestone, we remember those who came before us.

We remember Dr Eric Eustace Williams, our country's first Prime Minister and Dr Rudranath Capildeo, the first Leader of the Opposition of independent Trinidad and Tobago.

We remember Sir Ellis Clarke, the principal architect of our 1962 Constitution and the first President of Trinidad and Tobago. We remember Queen's Counsel Tajmool Hosein, who played a key role in making the



collective agreement on the 1962 Constitution possible.

These were all people of vision who laid the foundation for an independent Trinidad and Tobago, and we gratefully acknowledge their indelible role in the growth and development of our Nation.

As important and as necessary as it is to remember and reflect on our past, we now find ourselves at a significant juncture in the living history of our country.

Yes, we uphold a long-standing commitment to the principles of democracy and the rule of law.

We are blessed with abundant natural resources and the immeasurable talent of a culturally diverse people.

Our very own creation, the steelpan, continues to enthral audiences worldwide.

We are renowned for our music - calypso, chutney and soca and our festivals.

Our citizens and many of you, our nationals abroad, have brought recognition and honour to Trinidad and Tobago in the fields of literature, mathematics, medicine, the arts, international relations, politics and sport.

Yet what will be our legacy over the next fifty years? How will we be judged by our children and our children's children?

Let me assure you that my Government has a clear vision for the future of Trinidad and Tobago.

We foresee a country of self-assured, productive citizens who are confident in the knowledge that they are an essential part of our social and economic development.

We have set detailed goals, as evidenced by our seven interconnected pillars for sustainable development through people-centred governance as guideposts for the future.

But more importantly we are mindful of the present social, political and economic environments which dominate the world stage. We plan for the future, yes, but the only moments over which any of us have control is now.

Now is the time, now is our time and it is up to all of us to shape the present, in full awareness that we are laying the foundation for the generations to come.

I have full confidence in the

potential of our people and our capacity to succeed beyond expectations.

We only need to recall the achievements of our Olympic Team, at the recently concluded Summer 2012 Olympics in London, to realise that a small island nation of 1.3 million people can be a force to be reckoned with even alongside some of the largest nations in the world.

We were reminded that it's when ordinary people rise above expectations and seize the opportunity before them that milestones truly are recorded.

How absolutely awe-inspiring it was to see the red, white and black hoisted over the Olympic Stadium, as our National Anthem filled the arena. For a moment in time, with the eyes of the world on Trinidad and Tobago we, once again, fulfilled the hopes of those who had gone before.

For me, it served as a reminder of the talents and dedication of our people, and of what we can achieve on the world stage. We saw it in 1976 when Hasley Crawford won Trinidad and Tobago's first Olympic gold medal, over the years as our athletes continued to do us proud and represent at the highest level of sport and athletics, and again this year 2012 with our second gold medal won by Keshorn Walcott and the outstanding performance of all of our Olympians. We are a people capable of greatness.

And we can do it again. But we must continue to work together to move our country forward if we are to prosper and thrive.

We must rise above our differences for the greater national good.

Those of you resident abroad also have a key role to play in the future of Trinidad and Tobago.

You, the nationals of Trinidad and Tobago, are resident on every continent. Your adopted homeland may foster a different perspective on initiatives and developments taking place at home.

We value and welcome your input.

Not only do we want you to share and keep alive the traditions and culture of Trinidad and Tobago, we also need you to promote the attributes of our country as a business and recreational destination.

Our overseas Missions have been actively engaging foreign nationals, creating an awareness of the investment opportunities available in Trinidad and Tobago.

As a proactive Government, we acknowledge that some of the key factors contributing to economic viability are entrepreneurship, innovation and competitiveness.

We may be at a disadvantage because of our small size, but our natural and human resources can be leveraged to work to our benefit.

You, our nationals abroad, working in your new communities, as members of cultural organisations or through our Embassies and High Commissions, have an opportunity to share in and realise the collective vision for our country.

In Trinidad and Tobago we are now setting our sights even higher.

And we trust that we will see the fruits of our labours not only in the future, but right now!

Together we face the future strong and unafraid.

Our best days are yet to come. With the continued dedication, determination and loyalty of you, our citizens and nationals, we will rise together, in unity, one People represented by the Red, White and Black ready to re-define ourselves and deepen our influence in the region and the world.

To you, our nationals of Trinidad and Tobago, separated by geography but always in our hearts, I wish you all a very happy Golden Jubilee of Independence.

May God continue to bless you and your families and may God bless our great Nation, Trinidad and Tobago.

Happy 50th anniversary of Independence!



50 YEARS OF A STRONG T & T

Two thousand and twelve is a special year. Not only does it mark the Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second, but it is a year when the United Kingdom has hosted a very successful Olympics, and it prepares to host the Paralympic Games. Although we did not receive as many medals as the United Kingdom, Trinidad and Tobago stands proud having fielded its most successful team to the London Games. For Trinidad and Tobago to commemorate its 50th Anniversary on what is already an historic year is truly significant.

For us those of us at the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission in London, the Culture Fest was the launch of our 50th Anniversary of Independence celebrations. As we approach this milestone, we must reflect on the road to 50. Five decades ago we were being advised to take independence very seriously.

Today we can say that we did. Trinidad and Tobago at 50 has succeeded in building a strong economy and an even stronger sense of self. We have produced men and women who have excelled in many fields. We have produced Nobel laureates and beauty queens. This year our Olympic athlete Keshorn Walcott made us very proud with his gold medal throw in the men's javelin. As did double bronze medal holder Lalonde Gordon,



and the rest of the men's 4x400m relay team of Deon Lendore, Jarrin Solomon and Ade Alleyne-Forte and our entire Olympic team.

Our citizens have contributed nationally and internationally and they will continue to do so. Our government is stable and is moving forward with a well-established plan to improve the lives of our citizens and secure our future as a world leader.

So what was the journey like?

From inception, independence meant that we had to begin thinking very seriously about who and what we are as a country. We had to figure out what we hoped to achieve and how we hoped to shape our nation. To do that we had to ask ourselves some very hard questions. What does it mean to be a citizen of Trinidad and Tobago? What are the hallmarks of our culture, our national vision? In essence,

what does it mean to be a 'Trinidad and Tobagonian'?

We started with the design of the National Flag. The colours of Red for the vitality of our people, the warmth and energy of the sun and the courage and friendliness of our citizens. White for the sea that surrounds our beautiful isles and for the equality of all of the men and women who live in our country. Black as a symbol of our strength and the natural resources that we are so blessed to have.

As well as defining ourselves as a people, independence renders us responsible for our citizens, our resources and our development. This meant taking charge of our resource management, which we have done wisely.

We started by investing in our citizens. One of the first commitments we made to our people was making education a priority. Trinidad and Tobago in 2012 has accomplished the goal of Universal Primary Education, Universal Secondary Education and we heavily subsidise Tertiary Education. If the future of Trinidad and Tobago lies in our students' backpacks, then it is very secure.

That is why we took our commitment to meeting the Millennium Development Goals very seriously. As it stands in 2012 we have addressed all of the eight goals. I have already

discussed the strides we have made in Education. I can say that we have had great success with regards to the goal of Gender Equality. In Trinidad and Tobago, people of every creed and race, regardless of gender, can find an equal place. Our honourable Prime Minister is proof of that, being a woman of many firsts. Our country is the third best in the Commonwealth to raise a female child. The challenge for us in Trinidad and Tobago is to ensure that our men are not being left behind as our women progress.

We have also done well to meet the commitment to facilitate Global Partnership. Politically Trinidad and Tobago has always supported efforts to partner with other islands and continues to share its wealth and knowledge with the world. We are active participants in the United Nations, the Commonwealth, of which our own Prime Minister was the first female Chair-in-Office, the OAS and other multinational agencies. We have realised that global cooperation is essential to our development especially since we are a small state. We have also actively engaged in the support of states in distress and we will continue to do so whenever there is a need.

As for the remaining goals, I am confident that we will meet the deadline in 2015.

As a citizen of Trinidad and Tobago, when I look at our achievements at 50, I am swollen with pride. I am reminded of a quote from the academic James R. Hooker who said, "Any small island that can produce so many great men is worth notice."

Trinidad and Tobago is indeed

worthy of notice. Not only have we developed a very strong technical prowess but also a cultural one at that. Notting Hill Carnival starts this weekend, and at its root, it is a transplant of the Greatest Show on Earth; Trinidad and Tobago Carnival. We have shared our Carnival, with its calypso, soca and masquerade throughout the Caribbean, to the United States and Canada and even to the African continent.

The hallmark of Trinidad and Tobago innovation is the steelpan. Few countries can boast of having a national instrument. In ours you find our history of creativity, music, resistance and resilience.

And the innovation continues. There are now electronic steel pans and even a steel pan app for your cell phone or iPad. You can now play the sweet sounds of the steel pan everywhere you go.

This year on the 31st August 2012, I will be a very proud citizen of Trinidad and Tobago. 50 years ago we were a new state creeping onto the world stage. We have always punched above our weight and at 50 we can truly say that we are poised to play a more significant role in the international arena.

Selected photographs from the Trinidad and Tobago Culture Fest which was held at the Tricycle Theatre from July 26th - August 26th 2012



TRINIDAD & TOBAGO IS APPOINTED CHAIR OF CMAG

The Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) held its thirty-seventh meeting in London on 16 April, 2012. This was the Group's first regular meeting following its reconstitution by Commonwealth Heads of Government at their Meeting in Perth in October 2011.

The meeting was attended by Senator the Hon Bob Carr, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia; Hon Dr Dipu Moni, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh; Hon John Baird, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Canada; Hon AJ Nicholson, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica; Hon Bernard K Membe, Minister

for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Tanzania; Hon Dr Surujrattan Rambachan, then Minister of Foreign Affairs and Communications of Trinidad and Tobago; Hon Alfred Carlot, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Vanuatu; and Hon Ebusi Jusu, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Sierra Leone.

Among the items on the agenda was the vote for CMAG Chair and Vice-Chair. The Hon Dr Surujrattan Rambachan, then Minister of Foreign Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago was unanimously voted in as

its Chair; and Hon Bob Carr, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia as its Vice-Chair.

Unfortunately Trinidad and Tobago automatically relinquished the CMAG Chair when the Honorable Minister was reassigned to the Ministry of Local Government.

Pictured: Hon. Min. Rambachan greeting Mr. Kamallesh Sharma, Commonwealth Secretary-General during his visit to the Secretariat in April.



CARICOM HIGH COMMISSIONERS



On May 3rd High Commissioner Nicholas facilitated a meeting between the CARICOM High Commissioners and Ambassador Lorne T McDonnough CD, CEO of CARICOM Development Fund (CDF). The purpose of the meeting was to brief the CARICOM Caucus in London on the CDF's resource mobilisation efforts.

Among those in attendance were: Mrs Linda Brice, Acting High Commissioner, High Commission for St Lucia,

Mrs Joan Thomas-Edwards, Deputy High Commissioner, High Commission for Jamaica, and Mr. Euclid Goodman, Minister-Counsellor, High Commission for Barbados

SPIRITUAL SHOUTER BAPTIST LIBERATION DAY



Photo: Soyini Grey

High Commissioner Garvin Nicholas celebrated Spiritual Shouter Baptist Liberation Day with nationals on Saturday April 28th, 2012. The Thanksgiving Service, which was organised by the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission and the Spiritual 'Shouter' Baptist Movement UK, took place at the All Saints Church in Ladbroke Grove, London.

His Excellency Garvin Nicholas delivered a presentation that praised the Spiritual Shouter Baptists group for their resilience in the face of adversity. The High Commissioner traced the groups' history, calling them a symbol of the benefits that come from embracing diversity. As the High Commissioner noted in his speech, 61 years after the oppressive Shouter Baptist ordinance of 1971 was repealed, a school for children of the faith is being fast-tracked to completion.



28/04/2012

As His Excellency said, "Our very own Prime Minister, the Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar identifies as both Spiritual Baptist and Hindu. She has no doubt been instrumental in seeing that the faith has received its long overdue recognition, not only with the award of a public holiday, but by ensuring that our Spiritual Shouter Baptist children can be educated in a school that celebrates their spiritual foundation, much like

our children of other faiths."

Members of the various Spiritual Shouter Baptist churches were present in the audience. The Guest of Honour was Archbishop Barbara Burke of the Ark of the Covenant Spiritual Baptist Church of Success Village, Laventille.

The evening ended with the blessing of the banquet table and guests were treated to a sumptuous dinner.

INDIAN ARRIVAL DAY CELEBRATIONS AT THE HIGH COMMISSION

High Commissioner Nicholas hosted the London Mission's annual Indian Arrival Day Celebrations on Saturday 26th May, 2012. As always the Trinbagonian community turned out in their numbers for the event.

Father Henderson George, Mr Krishna Ragbir and Imam Rasheed Khan, represented the Christian, Hindu and Muslim faiths respectively, each saying a few words to bless the festivities.

In his welcome address the High Commissioner spoke about the value of support and selflessness.

His message on renouncing selfishness was echoed by



Photo: Soyini Grey

feature speaker Mrs. Sylvia Maharaj OBE JP. Through working in the service of others, Mrs Maharaj influenced the improvement of the legal representation offered to minority clients, particularly those of West Indian heritage. While her work was not for reward, this year she was ultimately recognised for her years of service when H.R.H. Prince Charles awarded her with the Order of the British Empire.

Dance kept the audience spellbound with their moves, while singer Isabella Birbal enchanted all with her songs.

The evening ended with a lavish curry spread that had delighted nationals coming back for more.



The evening's entertainment featured a mixture of the old and new. Classical Indian dancer Rohini Kumar and Anjali Mehta and Farzana Kamal of Bollywood

From clockwise from top left: H.E. Garvin Nicholas, Bollywood Indian dancers, dancer Rohini Kumar, H.E. Garvin Nicholas and spouse Dr. Nicola Alcála with participants.



EID UL ADHA

Message from the Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago.

ASALAAM-U-ALAIKUM!

My fellow citizens, we salute our Muslim Brothers and Sisters on the occasion of EID-UL-ADHA 2012, which will take place on Friday, 26th. October.

Eid-ul-Adha, the greater of the 2 EIDS, pays tribute to the dedication and sacrifice of Prophet Ibrahim and his passion for righteousness and love of mankind.

In this celebration of Eid, we see several lessons for all citizens of our blessed country.

Prophet Ibrahim showed us his determination in the face of tremendous obstacles; he



Miss Roanna Gopaul reading the Prime Minister's Message for Eid-ul-Adha

reminded us how important it is for us to stand for what we believe in, even if we have to stand alone.

Prophet Ibrahim taught us the significance of Faith in the Almighty and that no matter what we do, we must always put our absolute trust in our Creator and Sustainer.

As we prepare to celebrate Eid-ul-Adha, we remember our Muslim brothers and sisters of Trinidad and Tobago who will be amongst the millions of Muslims from around the world who are presently in

Saudi Arabia as part of the annual Hajj Pilgrimage. This is the largest, single gathering of mankind in the world and it is truly a spectacle to behold and witness.

My Government pays tribute to all who have gone to the Hajj and we pledge our continued support to facilitate those who wish to make that trip.

Eid Mubarak to one and all and may Almighty God accept your prayers and sacrifices.

REX DIXON'S "CARIBBEAN EDGE"



H.E. Garvin Nicholas talks to Dr. Patricia Mohammed and Rex Dixon at his exhibition

H.E. Nicholas travelled to the James Wray & Co. gallery in Belfast to launch an exhibit of Rex Dixon's latest works in the United Kingdom.

Rex Dixon's 'Caribbean Edge' brought some much needed Caribbean colour to Europe, a point to which His Excellency made reference in his speech.

The London born artist is now resident in Trinidad and Tobago



and his paintings reflect a true understanding of the culture and colour of the Caribbean. H.E. Nicholas said that he was pleased to see work created in Trinidad exhibited in the United Kingdom, and to such high acclaim.

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SHUBH DIVALI



The Trinidad and Tobago High Commission held its celebration in commemoration of the Festival of Diwali on November 17th, 2012. High Commissioner Nicholas, in recognition of the festival's special relevance to the family opened up his official home for the celebration. "This is time of deep familial connection. The home is the centre of the family, its base. I felt that there was no more significant place for us to hold this observance than here at the residence."

The chilly autumn afternoon seemed not to deter anyone as people came out in their numbers to join in the festivities. They came from as far as Birmingham, and Nottingham to celebrate with those from London and its suburbs.

In addressing some 300 guests of all ethnicities, religions and social backgrounds, the High Commissioner referred to Mother Lakshmi as the Goddess of wealth, prosperity and knowledge. "It is to her we turn for wisdom and understanding in prayer for another successful 50 years as an independent twin island state." His Excellency also encouraged all to think seriously about the message of Diwali as he reflected, "Much like it takes just one diya to banish the dark it takes one person to make a difference. We need individually to be responsible and therefore collectively as a whole we will move forward."

The High Commissioner lit the nine diyas at the shrine for Goddess Lakshmi for the start of the ceremony and joined Pandita Arsha Gosine on the

floor as she led the Diwali pūjā. Immigration Attaché Narinesingh Lal gave the feature address in which he gave a detailed explanation of the spiritual significance of the festival. Gobin Dwarika performed the bhajans.

The entertainment on the programme included songs by Dora Fernandes and Meera Mankanda and classical Indian dances by Crishna and Camilita Budha. The evening ended with an invitation for guests to partake in preeti bhojan (refreshments and dinner).

Top Left: H.E. Garvin Nicholas taking part in the Diwali pūjā, lead by Pandita Arsha Gosine; a selection of the crowd at the Diwali reception, the row of diyas lining the driveway of the official residence; Classical Indian dancers Crishna and Camilita Budha, image of Mother Lakshmi and the nine diyas.

H.E. LEADS TRIBUTES TO BARONESS BENJAMIN AT THE ACTION FOR CHILDREN'S ARTS AWARDS



Pictured: Rudolph Walker, Baroness Benjamin and H.E. Garvin Nicholas

Baroness Benjamin, Floella Benjamin, author, and Play School doyen was recognised for her outstanding contribution to children's television and her championing of arts for children, at an awards ceremony at BAFTA, Picadilly, London, on 20th October, 2012.

The annual Children's Arts Awards, organised by Action for Children's Arts (ACA), celebrates artists who have made a lasting contribution through their work to children's art and welfare in the UK. Baroness Benjamin was presented with the J.M.Barrie Award for a body of work that will stand the test of time. Former recipients include Roger McGough and Quentin Blake.

His Excellency Garvin Nicholas led a host of distinguished guests who came to pay tribute to Baroness Benjamin. Trinidadian actor Rudolph Walker (*EastEnders*), former Play School colleagues Wayne Jackman, Stuart McGugan, Michael Omer, Carol Chell and Sir Julian Fellowes, creator of the television series *Downtown*

Abbey, were also there to pay tribute.

Baroness Benjamin was born in Pointe-a-Pierre, Trinidad and Tobago. She has gone on to distinguish herself in the broadcast media industry and as an advocate for children's rights and diversity issues. She is a close friend of the High Commissioner and is Chair of the All Parliamentary Party Group he created to deal specifically with Trinidad and Tobago's issues.

Baroness Benjamin visited Trinidad in November. HE Nicholas arranged for her to have an audience with the Honourable Prime Minister where she was presented with a token of gratitude for her continued interest in Trinidad and Tobago.



Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar today received Baroness Floella Benjamin of Beckenham and the British High Commissioner Arthur Snell at the St. Clair Office of the Prime Minister

T & T SUPPORTS THE EDUCATION OF UNDERPRIVILEGED GIRLS



Food and music proved to be a winning combination for the Trinidad and Tobago booth at the annual Commonwealth Countries League (CCL) Fair. The crowd could not get enough of the tasty foods and drinks on sale and as such had the High Commission's staff quite busy trying to meet their needs.

The annual fair is the major fundraising activity of the Commonwealth Countries League and supports underprivileged girls in secondary education. The fair was held at the Kensington Town Hall, London on 13th November 2012.

His Excellency Garvin Nicholas was at hand to assist the High Commission's fundraising efforts which this year resulted in a donation of £1200 towards the CCL Education Fund.



THE HIGH COMMISSIONER OPENS DEANSTON DISTILLERY'S NEW VISITOR CENTRE

On 15th June, 2012 the High Commissioner of Trinidad and Tobago launched a new visitor centre at the historic Deanston Distillery operated by Burn Stewart Distillers. Burn Stewart Distillers is part-owned by Angostura Limited and the invitation for the High Commissioner to open the centre was made in recognition of its significant ties with Trinidad and Tobago.



Photo: AFP

Located on the banks of the river Teith, the Deanston Distillery and Visitor Centre offers a unique insight into Scotland's industrial past and traditional whisky production. The new Visitor Centre is expected to attract 15,000 visitors a year and contribute to whisky tourism, an industry generating an estimated £30 million for the Scottish tourism economy.

"I am pleased to be able to officially open the Visitor Centre in the Deanston Distillery. Doune, Scotland is such a lovely place and I have thoroughly enjoyed learning about the whisky distilling process. This building is rich in history, and has links with Scotland's strong industrial and engineering past. It is very satisfying to know that Trinidad and Tobago is improving its

commercial ties with this historic community," says H.C. Garvin Nicholas.

Its location in the heart of the Central Belt renders Deanston Visitor Centre accessible to day visitors from Scotland's major cities in addition to visitors from overseas.



BRAND NEW LOOK FOR AN ICONIC BRAND

with both the recipe and the label remaining the same since 1824."

Nick Farrow, Chairman of QUEST on behalf of Angostura at the launch of the Jubilee bitters at his residence.

The iconic Angostura® aromatic bitters has a brand new look. As a long standing Royal Warrant Holder Angostura launched the limited edition pack in time to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee on the 5th of June.

Alex Thomas, Senior Manager of Sales and Marketing, said: "This will be the first change that we have ever made to the product in nearly 200 years

Only 6000 bottles were released to the public available exclusively from Waitrose. The part proceeds from the sale of this very special edition was donated to The Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust (QUEST). For every bottle sold, Angostura will donate £1 to this charity that helps further the careers of craftsmen and women in Great Britain.

HE Garvin Nicholas handed over a cheque for £25,000 to

An advertisement for Caribbean Airlines. It features a red telephone booth in the foreground. The background shows a flight path over the ocean. Text on the ad includes: "Fly with the warmth of the Islands to Port of Spain", "from as low as GBP 397*", "one way inclusive of taxes", "BOOK NOW: Visit our website, call 1-868-625-7220 or contact your travel agent today", and "caribbean-airlines.com".

ANGOSTURA LAUNCHES ITS JUBILEE BITTERS AT THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S RESIDENCE



CARICOM DIASPORA MEETING AT THE TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO CULTURE FEST

One hundred and twenty persons attended a CARICOM Diaspora meeting at the Trinidad and Tobago Culture Fest in Kilburn on 21st August, 2012. His Excellency Garvin Nicholas offered the Cultural Village to facilitate a meeting of CARICOM High Commissioners and representatives to discuss the shared objective of encouraging UK-based Diaspora to re-invest in the region towards its development and growth from a trade and investment perspective.

High Commissioner Nicholas, in his welcome address, outlined the expectations for the meeting and reiterated the tenets of the agreement reached at the UK Caribbean Forum which was held in Grenada in January 2012.

The meeting was structured in two parts. The first session saw presentations from Shaun Clarke of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office; Gus Franklyn-Bute of Invest Hong Kong; Edwin Laurent, formally of the Commonwealth Secretariat and Denis St. Bernard of Caribbean Enterprise Network UK highlighting the burgeoning trade opportunities for interested investors and the best approach to addressing common barriers.

The aforementioned persons then participated in a panel discussion chaired by H.E. Dr. Carl Roberts, High Commissioner for Antigua and Barbuda, which shaped the second session of the Diaspora Meeting. The dialogue centred around the needs and concerns



H.E. Aloun Ndombet-Assamba, High Commissioner for Jamaica with ... and David Roberts, Carib Direct Ltd.

of the Caribbean Community in the UK and invited those attending to contribute to the formation of a regional policy which would provide a platform for the trade and investment interests of CARICOM.

Attendees identified a need for a Caribbean news network and a "Caribbean House" business model based loosely on the Asian experience. High Commissioner Roberts summed up the proceedings and advised that the proposals

would be discussed at the forthcoming CARICOM High Commissioners' meeting and the results disseminated to the Diaspora via their respective High Commissions.



pictured: Denis St. Bernard, CENUK ; and His Excellency Dr Carl B W Roberts address participants at the CARICOM Diaspora Meeting



Trinidad and Tobago created a big splash at the first official day of the World Travel Market on November 5, 2012 at London's ExCel Centre. His Excellency High Commissioner Garvin Nicholas and the Minister of Tourism, the Honourable Stephen Cadiz showed London and the rest of the world what Trini hospitality is all about by staging a world class invitation to Trinidad and Tobago.



High Commissioner Nicholas and Minister Cadiz took part in several meetings throughout the day with the various stakeholders including Virgin Holidays, Tropical Sky and Monarch.

For celebrity watchers the Trinidad and Tobago booth was a prime spot as the country's top cricket stars Brian Lara, Darren Ganga and Dwayne Bravo were on hand to sign mini-cricket bats while footballers Dwight Yorke and Shaka Hislop signed mini footballs. The proceeds from the sale of the autographed memorabilia went to the Just a Drop international water aid charity.

TRAVEL WRITING AWARD



(From L-R): Justin Francis, responsibletravel.com, Emma Thomson; Amanda Wills, Virgin Holidays; H.E. Garvin Nicholas

The Responsible Tourism Awards was held the World Travel Market at London's ExCel Centre on November 7th, 2012. Trinidad and Tobago sponsored the award for the Best in Responsible Tourism Writing. His Excellency Garvin Nicholas was on hand to present journalist Emma Thomson with her prize for the article At Home with the Himba.

This is the second year that Trinidad and Tobago has sponsored this particular category which was one of 14 awards presented that night.

*taste OF T&T IN LONDON



From June 21-24 Trinidad and Tobago brought some serious flavour to Taste of London: a global food festival held in Regent's Park.

Visitors to the Trinidad and Tobago booth were met with rum punch, single estate cocoa chocolate, sweet pan and real mas.

All offerings were richly appreciated by those who stopped by.

ENERGY MINISTRY TALKS RENEWABLES IN LONDON



In May of 2012 the Ministry of Energy and Energy Affairs embarked upon a Renewable Energy and Energy Initiatives Visit to London.

The delegation was made up of Randy Ramadhar Singh, Special Renewable Energy Advisor to the Minister; Randy Maurice, Senior Planning Officer; Richard Jeremie, Chief Technical Officer and Vernetta Calvin-Smith; Ministry of Housing and the Environment.

The party met with interested representatives from the Energy Sector in the UK to discuss the Government's focus on non-fossil fuels, energy education and conservation. The meeting was held at the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission under the auspices of H.E. Garvin Nicholas, the High Commissioner.

CARIBBEAN INVESTMENT WEEK



investTT in its dedication to attracting Foreign Direct Investment into Trinidad and Tobago attended and facilitated Caribbean Investment Week 2012 in Port-of-Spain.

Caribbean Investment Week was a two part business event, featuring the Caribbean Investment Forum (CIF) 2012, and the Trade and Investment Convention (TIC) 2012. CIF focused on discussions surrounding key sectors and areas of development within the Caribbean Basin.

The forum targeted industry and business leaders who were interested in investment opportunities and information on specific initiatives taking place within the various Caribbean islands.

The two day function was attended by 400 delegates and was supported at all levels of the Trinidad and Tobago government, with a gala dinner hosted by the Honourable Prime Minister, Mrs. Kamla-Persad Bissessar.

TRADE BUSINESS FORUM



***Pictured:** Trade Minister Vasant Bharat address attendees at the Trade Business Forum*

The Mission held a Business Forum on July 26th 2012 featuring a host of eminent speakers; including the Hon. Minister of Trade, Industry and Investment Vasant Bharat who spoke on a range of topics including 'Doing Business with Europe.'

CARIBBEAN AIRLINES MAKES ITS TRIUMPHANT RETURN TO LONDON



His Excellency Garvin Nicholas chaired a special Nationals' Meeting in April to announce the return of Caribbean Airlines to the Piarco London route.

The Airlines' sales representative Juanita Collins delivered an impassioned call to the Diaspora to place their full Support behind CAL.

ALIGN FASHION SHOWCASE AT THE MAYFAIR HOTEL



His Excellency Garvin Nicholas was a special guest speaker at the exclusive Align Private Showcase in London's Mayfair Hotel on 12th September, 2012. T & T designers Rachel Ross, Meiling and Anya Ayoung Chee presented their SS/13 collection to a select crowd of international press, buyers, and fashion, music and creative industry professionals. The showcase formed part of Trinidad and Tobago Coalition of Services Industries' (TTCSI) efforts to promote services sector exports. It was designed to take advantage of the presence of industry professionals who flock to London to get a jump on next season's trends. TTCSI will continue to work with the designers to follow up on the leads made at the showcase and ensure this initiative materializes in tangible business transactions.

FORWARD HOME: THE POWER OF THE CARIBBEAN DIASPORA



(L-R) Dr, Keith Nurse, Executive Producer, Forward Home; Roanna Gopaul, Head of Chancery, T&T High Commission; and Lisa Wickham, Producer/ Director, Forward Home at the screening of the film at the Institute of Contemporary Arts on Nov 5th, 2012

His Excellency Garvin Nicholas says that filmmakers and producers from Trinidad and Tobago need to take advantage of all of the opportunities available to them to get their stories made. The High Commissioner was referring to the production of the new film Forward Home: The Power of the Caribbean Diaspora.

High Commissioner Nicholas supported this venture because of its subject matter and excellent production value. The film addresses a subject that is of critical importance to the Caribbean but remains attractive to an international audience. High Commissioner Nicholas says that now that filmmakers have greater access to funding and assistance they need to start producing a wider range of films.

T&T TAKE SILVER GILD AT THE CHELSEA FLOWER SHOW



The Trinidad and Tobago Horticultural Society won the Silver Gild at the Chelsea Flower Show. The Joan Wilson design is entitled, 'Find a Peaceful Corner in the Caribbean'

5-A-SIDE FOOTBALL

The Trinidad and Tobago High Commission team led by His Excellency Garvin Nicholas narrowly missed out on first place in the Gates and Partners 5-A-Side Football Tournament.

The tournament took place Friday 7th September 2012 at the Lucozade Power League, Docklands, London.



Front Row(L-R) H.E. Garvin Nicholas (Captain & Goalkeeper), Marlana (friend of the Mission), Michael Graham, Simon deGuglielmo

(From L-R) Marlon Choo Ying , Geoffery Dalton Brown Maharaj, Donna Philip-Forde, Ronald Dass, Alexei Nicholas, Akil Forde



COMMONWEALTH LUNCH WITH THE QUEEN



Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II celebrated her 60 years as sovereign with a special lunch with the Commonwealth Heads of Government.

The lunch took place at the Commonwealth Secretariat on June 6th, 2012. His Excellency Garvin Nicholas, the Honorable Prime Minister's representative in London, attended in her stead.

TROOPING THE COLOURS



Trooping the Colour marks the official celebration of the sovereign's birthday.

Though her Majesty's birthday is on April 21st, the public celebration of her birthday usually takes place in June when good weather is more likely.

This year's Trooping the Colour took place on June 16th, and was especially significant because of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Anniversary.

His Excellency Garvin Nicholas and his spouse Dr. Alcála took in the celebrations, which included a reception at Number 10 Downing Street hosted by UK Prime Minister David Cameron.

THE GOLD BOOK LAUNCHES



The Gold Book : the 50th anniversary edition of Trinidad and Tobago: Terrific and Tranquil was launched at the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission on November 12th, 2012 under the auspices of the Minister of Planning and Sustainable Development, Dr. the Honourable Bhoendradatt Tewarie. The Minister highly recommended the publication as a excellent photographic representation of our beloved country.

The Honourable Minister used the opportunity to launch two other books published by Hansib Publications Ltd: Kamla: Trinidad and Tobago's First Woman Prime Minister and Tobago: Clean, Green and Serene.

BRITISH CARIBBEAN VETERANS



Over one hundred members and guests attended this year's British Caribbean Veteran's Summer Ball on Saturday June 23rd, 2012 at the Tally Ho, the West Midlands Police Sports and Social Club.

Distinguished guests for the evening included His Excellency High Commissioner for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago Mr Gavin Nicholas, Minister Councillor from the High Commissioner of Jamaica, Mr Lincoln Downer and Lord Mayor's Deputy (Birmingham), Councillor Sybil Spence.

The event was well attended and a good time was had by all.

MEETING OF THE ALL PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP (A.P.P.G.) FOR TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO



The second meeting of the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Trinidad and Tobago under the theme “Celebrating 50 years of Independence. What’s next for Trinidad and Tobago?” took place on June 20th, 2012 at the House of Lords. His Excellency Garvin Nicholas initiated the discussion, addressing the issue of Trinidad and Tobago’s contribution in the realm of arts and culture. He presented a strong case that our country could serve as a much needed model of the advantages of multi-cultural societies.

“We are a shining example for inter-religious freedom,” says His Excellency.

The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Energy and Energy Affairs, Mr. Selwyn Lashley, was on hand to guide the participants through a comprehensive review of the history of the energy sector. Though at the time of his visit

the National Energy Policy was under review, he was able to share the four areas of prominence for going forward in that sector.

Those areas include an increase in Deep Water Exploration, a commitment to developing our potential in On-Shore Exploration, going further down-stream with Natural Gas and a commitment to teaching citizens about energy efficiency and renewables.

After Mr. Lashley’s presentation it was concluded that developments in the energy sector were continuing in a positive direction. Members approved of the move towards improving energy efficient and the development into renewables.

Discussion at the meeting moved to the matter of encouraging Diasporic reinvestment in Trinidad and Tobago. His Excellency reiterated that such activity is welcome by the present Government.

The APPG for Trinidad and Tobago was created by His Excellency and first met in the House of Lords on Tuesday 28th June, 2011. APPGs are informal, cross-party, interest groups which bring together parliamentarians and interested parties to lobby for certain issues.



LISTENING TO THE CONCERNS OF THE DIASPORA



the clock on our democracy.”

His Excellency engaged the group in a discussion about their concerns listening intently to their comments. He assured them that a report would be sent to the Office of the Prime Minister for review.

The meeting was cordial and the conversation moved on to discuss the High Commission’s relationship with the Diaspora.

Several members opted to join the Mission’s mailing list so that they could be kept abreast of news and events. His Excellency reiterated that the doors of the High Commission are open to everyone and all views are welcome.

On November 2nd, 2012 His Excellency Garvin Nicholas met with protesters gathered in front of the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission in London. The High Commissioner invited the group to come out of the cold to discuss their concerns.

The High Commissioner’s message was clear: “The

strength and sincerity of any democracy is only put to the test during periods of great adversity. This government has always sought to preserve the fundamental democratic principles of free speech and the freedom of assembly. As High Commissioner I must respect the rights of all citizens, regardless of political affiliation and I intend to do just that. I will not turn back

BRIDGING THE GAP



Historic Meeting of the CARICOM, Asian and African High Commissions at the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission, London on November 2nd 2012. The various representatives met to discuss issues pertinent to the future of the Commonwealth

THE HIGH COMMISSIONER AND THE ENERGY MINISTER ATTEND HIGH LEVEL MEETINGS IN LONDON



His Excellency Garvin Nicholas and the Hon. Kevin Ramnarine, Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs met with officials from BP and NGC at BP's London Offices on November 19th, 2012 where the announcement was made of BP Trinidad and Tobago's (bpTT) discovery of an

estimated 1 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in the Savonetta gas field. The find renders the size of the gas field to double the original estimates.

Attending the meeting with the High Commissioner and the Honorable Minister were Norman Christie, President

BPtt; Bob Fryar, Executive Vice President Production, BP; Bernard Looney, Executive Vice President Development, BP; Selwyn Lashey and Richard Jeremie of the Ministry of Energy and Energy Affairs and officials from Gasfin.



H.E. Nicholas, the Hon. Minister Ramnarine and officers from the Energy Ministry met with executives from Gasfin, NGC and Caledonia Investments at the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission in London on November 19th, 2012.



His Excellency Garvin Nicholas and the Hon. Kevin Ramnarine, Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs meet with officials from Trinity Exploration & Production on 19th November, 2012.

Trinity is a privately owned company which is based in Trinidad with sub-offices in Edinburgh and Denver.

THE HIGH COMMISSIONER'S VARIOUS BUSINESS MEETINGS



July 27th 2012 - H.E. Nicholas meets with Cllr Michael Adeyeye, Mayor of Brent



September 5th 2012 - H.E. Nicholas receives a token from Dave Bobb, Director of Sport, Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs



April 18th 2012 - H.E. Nicholas engages in discussion with Hywel R John, CEO Bayfield Energy Holdings



March 3rd 2012 - H.E. Nicholas talks tourism with the Tourism Development Corporation and the Ministry of Tourism

T&T AND MOROCCO STRENGTHEN RELATIONS



His Excellency Garvin Nicholas with Her Highness Princess Lalla Journala Malaoui

As a result of His Excellency's direct intervention, citizens of Trinidad and Tobago will have their Moroccan visa granted to them upon entry to the Kingdom of Morocco.

Citizens will, however, have to submit an application to the Moroccan Consulate General, London in advance of their journey. This application can now be facilitated by the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission, London.

These discussion took place at the Moroccan Embassy, where His Excellency met with His Highness Princess Lalla Journala Malaoui. She expressed to His Excellency, her desire to work with Trinidad and Tobago on initiatives that would be beneficial to both nations.



BLUE PLAQUE TRIBUTE

On a beautiful and sunny afternoon in London on August 24th, 2012 H. E. Garvin Nicholas attended the unveiling of two blue plaques for the “Fathers of Notting Hill Carnival”. The men in question, Russell Henderson and Leslie Palmer, both put in place some of the essential characteristics of the festival that are still visible today.

The plaques were positioned in the birthplace of London’s Carnival near Carnival Square on Tavistock Road.

His Excellency paid tribute to Russell Henderson aka Mr. Pan Man who is said to have planted the seed for the festival in 1965. He was performing at the Notting Hill Fayre when he decided to move his concert on to the road, taking the



audience with him.

Leslie Palmer brought the masquerade to London Carnival. He imported costumes from Trinidad and was responsible for launching the international careers of Lawrence “Stretch” Noel, Mack Copeland and Peter Minshall. He thus succeeded in bringing a wider audience to Carnival.

Today he is using his expertise to get the world excited about our sister isle and has published the book, A Guide to Tobago, which was sold at the Trinidad and Tobago Culture Fest.

NOTTING HILL CARNIVAL



Trinidad and Tobago Carnival may be the greatest show on earth, but Notting Hill Carnival lays claim to being the largest festival in Europe.

This year the 50th anniversary celebrations saw the red, white and black of Trinidad and Tobago being proudly represented on the streets as Londoners danced to the beat of steelband and soca music.

MISS TRINIDAD & TOBAGO UK



His Excellency Garvin Nicholas attended the tenth anniversary of the Miss Trinidad and Tobago UK Beauty Pageant on Saturday 22nd September 2012.

The winner of the competition Miss Jenelle Fraser represented Maracus Valley, St Joseph.

A RED STEELPAN FOR THE MISSION



Mazzini Gill of Gill’s Pan Shop, Trinidad presented gift of a red power coated steelpan to His Excellency in commemoration of our independence anniversary.

The pan is a 50th Anniversary Embassy edition in tribute of T&T’s 50 years of independence.

MAYOR OF LONDON CELEBRATES TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO'S INDEPENDENCE JUBILEE



H.E. Garvin Nicholas and Mayor of London, Boris Johnson

First, let me thank the Right Honourable Mayor of London Boris Johnson for hosting this celebration of Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica's Jubilee Independence Anniversary.

Second, let me start by expressing my concern for my Caribbean partner Jamaica, in the wake of Hurricane Sandy.

Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica have always enjoyed very close relations and we stand ready to support in any way we can to facilitate your recovery.

2012 has been an eventful and most memorable year for all of us. Celebrations began with Her Majesty's Diamond jubilee: 60 exemplary years of strong but fair and extremely compassionate leadership of the United Kingdom and the varied countries of the Commonwealth.

One of the most significant developments under Her Majesty's tenure, at least to those of us gathered here today, was the matter of our

Independence.

Independence signalled the beginning of a new era for Trinidad and Tobago. But do not be lulled into a misleading sense that our history began in 1962. Our history is as old as yours in the so-called old world; it simply isn't as well recorded. As the then UK Prime Minister mentioned in his congratulatory note to our young nation,

"The history of Trinidad and Tobago has been long, varied and colourful. Its starts upon a new chapter today as these two famous islands join the ranks of independent nations.

"On this great occasion I express to you...the goodwill of the British Government and the people. We welcome you cordially as a new member of the Commonwealth.

We hope and trust that the friendship and understanding which have grown-up between us over these past many and eventful years will continue and develop and we send to you, our colleagues, and all the people of Trinidad and Tobago our most sincere good wishes for the future."

The warm and cordial relationship which Trinidad and Tobago enjoyed with the United Kingdom as a newly independent nation has continued to grow and flourish over the years. Our bilateral relations with the United Kingdom remain among our most important.

The United Kingdom is an extremely important trading partner for Trinidad and Tobago. Many of the United Kingdom's largest companies have interests in our oil and gas, construction, telecommunications, education, and security sectors.



H.E. Garvin Nicholas presented the London Mayor with a token of his appreciation. It included a copy of Terrific and Tranquil and a bottle of the finest rum in the world Angostura 1824.

This close relationship comes on the back of a shared history dating over two centuries. The UK's influence remains evident in our legal and parliamentary system and our shared passion for cricket and football.

As High Commissioner I am pleased to report that there has been a move towards developing our cultural exchanges as well. It is no secret that London hosted an extremely successful Olympic and Paralympic Games over the summer. The latter was sold out for the first time in its history. I congratulate Mayor Johnson, Lord Coe and the entire organising committee for their hard-work and well deserved success.

London's bid for the Olympics was no doubt strengthened by its reputation as a cosmopolitan city. As such we must acknowledge the contribution made by the West Indian community to the city's cultural tapestry.

The spirit of Notting Hill Carnival, which boasts of being the largest Carnival in the world, was born in Trinidad and Tobago and migrated here with our nationals in the 1960s.



H.E. Garvin Nicholas chats with Baroness Floelle Benjamin and guests

This summer, when the world came to London, the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission hosted a Trinidad and Tobago Culture Fest at the Tricycle Theatre in Kilburn. It was a month long festival showcasing the best of Trinbagonian music, dance, art, literature, theatre and cuisine. We featured artistes based both in London and in Trinidad and Tobago. Much of the feedback we received suggested that the festival was well-received and served as a much needed boost to the creative sector. It is more than two months since the Culture Fest ended and we are still receiving inquiries about the artists and the art-

work featured. London needs to see more of Trinidad and Tobago, its food, its music, its way of life.

I end with my sincerest thanks to the Mayor of London for this wonderful reception, and I invite you to consider a visit to our twin-island republic when the opportunity avails itself.



H.E. Aloun Ndombet-Assamba, Mayor of London Boris Johnson and H.E. Garvin Nicholas at the City Hall Reception for Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica's Jubilee Independence Anniversary.



David Ijaduola from Ebony Steelband

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO TAKES OVER IPSWICH FOR ONE DAY

Trinidad and Tobago released music and mas on a warm summer's day in Ipswich.

The location on June 30th, 2012 was the Christchurch Park in the middle of the annual Ipswich Arts Festival.

Soca and pan took centre stage courtesy the Road March King Shurwayne Winchester, pannist Adrian Jaikaran and the magnificent CSI Steelband.

This is the second consecutive year that the High Commission has sponsored this successful event. His Excellency made note of the enthusiastic response of the audience to the show. Perhaps Trinidad and Tobago should come to Ipswich every year?



Adrian Jaikaran, pannist



Parang band Rebuskar from the Carib Community in Santa Rosa, Arima,



Soca music fans at Ipswich



Reshma Bissoon-Deokie and Beverly Allen of the T&T High Commission



H.E. Garvin Nicholas, Mayoress Mary Burke, and Bevon Garcia, Event Organiser to the far right



CSI Steelband's baby pannists



Veteran soca artiste Lima Calbio



Shurwayne Winchester performing from inside the crowd



50 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, HIGH COMMISSION
Website: www.tthighcommission.co.uk
Email: tthc@btconnect.co.uk
Tel: 0207 245 9351

Trinidad and Tobago High Commission, London
Celebrating 50 years of Independence

Trinidad & Tobago

CULTURE FEST

JULY 26TH TO AUGUST 25TH, 2012
OPENING DAILY FROM 10AM-11PM

FREE ENTRY

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO CULTURAL VILLAGE
TRICYCLE THEATRE, KILBURN, LONDON NW6 7JR



A CULTURAL FESTIVAL PAR EXCELLENCE

H.E. Garvin Nicholas, High Commissioner for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Kingdom promised to produce an ambitious Trinidad and Tobago Cultural Village to celebrate our country's 50th Anniversary of Independence. The High Commissioner envisaged that a cultural exploration of Trinidad and Tobago would be the ideal forum to leverage on the visitors to the London Olympics.

In keeping with this vision, the Trinidad and Tobago Culture Fest was launched on Wednesday 25th July, 2012.

The launch which was sponsored by BPTT was well attended. Specially invited guests included the Minister of Trade, Industry and Investment Senator the Hon. Vasant Bharath, Regional President of BP Trinidad and Tobago Mr Norman Christie

and Mr. Robert Riley, Head of Safety and Operational Risk Competency and Capability, BP. Mr. Rajiv Shandilya, Chairman of the Tourism Development Company of Trinidad and Tobago was also in attendance.

Guests were impressed by the transformation of the Tricycle Theatre into a warm Caribbean environment that is distinctly Trinidad and Tobago. Coconut trees were erected at the entrance and a sign placed welcomed all to "Trinidad and Tobago". Even the weather cooperated. The sun shone brightly leaving many to ask if that too had been brought to London for the Village.

The combination of superior Trini food, drinks by Angostura and entertainment by the talented Trinibagonian artistes including Mungal Patasar and 3 Canal culminated in what His Excellency referred to as "a brilliant showing".

The public were invited to come and experience all this and more at the Trinidad and Tobago Culture Fest which was housed for four weeks over the Olympic period at the Tricycle Theatre and featured many components of Trinidad and Tobago's culture including art, music, dance, theatre, cuisine and more.



H.E. Garvin Nicholas with Hon. Vasant Bharat, Minister of Trade, Industry and Investment



Carnival dancers at the Culture Fest

H.E. Garvin Nicholas said "This is something that I feel very strongly about. We have such a rich and diverse culture and it is very important that we share it with the world."

The Culture Fest did much to raise the profile of Trinidad and Tobago in the United Kingdom.



Mungal Patasar and Pantar

THE LAUNCH



Dr Nicola Alcála and guests



Greta Mendez



Top row: Belmont Freetown Cultural Arts & Folk Performing Company; Roger Roberts, 3Canal
2nd row: Trade Minister Vasant Bharat and Rajiv Shandilya TDC; Derek Hudson BG East Africa and Robert Riley BP; Danielle Jones bpTT, Roger Roberts and Renee Castle
3rd row: Guests at the Tobago Rum Shop; Khadeece Celestine Overdrive; Marc Bird and Renuka Koninger TTHC
4th row: Beverly Allen TTHC, Flower Omowaleola BenTV, Roanna Gopaul TTHC and Beverley Awonaya TTHC
5th row: Yohann Chuckaree playing the Percussive Harmonic Instrument (PHI)

FIVE WHOLE DAYS OF MACHEL MONTANO AT THE CULTURE FEST



A CULTURE FEST FOR CHILDREN



A central part of the Trinidad and Tobago Village was the programme of children's workshops. This presented an opportunity to expose London children to the vast range of creative expressions coming from our twin island republic.

Atillah Springer, workshop curator, described the experience as a truly rewarding one.

For two weeks two groups of thirty children were treated to the best of Trinidad and Tobago's cultural forms, from film to food.

"The most interesting thing about it was that so many parents stayed for the sessions. Many of them had Caribbean roots and so they strongly identified with the information and activities being shared in the sessions."

All the workshops were largely over-subscribed but it was hard to turn away enthusiastic patrons.

"Like a lot of grown-ups, children might know a little bit about Trinidad and Tobago thanks to Carnival and steel pan. We wanted to give

them a full picture of how the festival of Carnival came to be so important to us as well as a taste of the many other festivals and cultures that make T&T such a diverse and amazing place", Springer explained.

Daily workshops were held in storytelling, led by poet and cultural activist Eintou Pearl Springer who introduced the children to Midnight Robber, Anansi and Ramleela stories.

With cuisine being such a focus of T&T life, the children were given a chance to talk about food and to discuss healthy ways of preparing familiar Caribbean foods. These workshops were led by nutritionist Lola Ross and chef Hassan de Four.

There were also special sessions with classical Indian

dance teacher Quincy Kendell Charles and Orisha songs led by Efuwape Andall and other drummers who were accompanying Ella Andall for her performance at the Emancipation celebrations.

Genesis bandleaders Symone and Kevin Williams got the children excited about mas making workshops at the end of which they were able to "jump up" in the costumes they had made during the week.

Perhaps one of the most popular workshops was the stickfighting which was facilitated by Keegan Taylor and Rondel Benjamin of the Bois Academy of Trinidad and Tobago. They were accompanied by stick fighters and chantwells Kongo Barra and King Stokely.

During their sessions the children were additionally treated to films provided by the Trinidad and Tobago Film Company. Among the favourites were 'Pothound' and 'Vendor Rivalry' as well as 'Atiba Williams - Pan Prodigy'.



PLAY IS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF LEARNING



Ava Hutchinson leading a children's workshop



A child making a Carnival mask



Machel Montano interacting with children after reading his book



Dance workshop for all ages



Ronald Benjamin teaching a stick fighting workshop



Ballet dancers from Trinidad and Tobago



THE ENDURING APPEAL OF PAUL KEENS-DOUGLAS

BY MICHELLE JOHNSON



If Trinidad and Tobago was a person, comedian and storyteller Paul Keens-Douglas might be described as a brother who lights up her day with hilarious memories of their childhood. His stories about Tanti Merle and Tim Tim, would carry her back to a time when life was more innocent; an era which was very sweet, though perhaps a little backward. To a younger generation of Trinis, he would be more of a great uncle; captivating them with imaginative tales such as Fedon's flute or spontaneously spinning a story involving schoolboys and cricket, and the broken window of a principal's office.

Still wowing crowds as far afield as London, Keens-Douglas' appearances at the Trinidad and Tobago Culture Fest, aka The Village, in August were packed out. That Machel Montano was one of his main rivals when it came to the crowds queuing to get in, is a testament to Paul Keens-Douglas' ongoing popularity, relevance and sheer appeal to Trinibagonian and other audiences. At the Village, diasporians reconnected with the heart of Trini culture, the diversity of Trini talent, Trini friends and fabulous Trini food. Speaking the very language of the Trinibagonian in his show, readings and discussions, Paul Keens-Douglas helped to seal that recalibration.

He is widely recognized as a pioneer in the development of the oral tradition in the English speaking Caribbean. His particular brand of performance thrives on the emphasis on the vernacular, which is as essential to his act as the stories he weaves on stage. Performances by Jamaica's Louise Bennett 'were in a sense my inspiration to try my hand at writing the vernacular,' Keens-Douglas says. He and 'Miss Lou' as he fondly refers to Bennett became close friends, performing together on many occasions. Having honed his skills in the art form, he became the recipient of coveted awards such as the Humming Bird Silver award and the Zora Neale Hurston award.

Paul Keens-Douglas' first appearance at the Village was billed 'Talk Time Independence!' which showcased leading storytellers, comedians, writers and commentators with a passion for the culture and life of the Republic, in a discussion around the theme of independence. This particular event was intentionally created as a vehicle to import the atmosphere and drama of Paul Keens-Douglas' Trinidad based creation, Talk Tent, which takes place annually during the carnival season. Melanie Abrahams and Dominique Le Gendre, curators of

Talk Time, were keen to localize the Talk Tent experience for the London Diaspora while 'allowing the event to take on a character of its own'.

'As Ah Was Saying.....' set Paul Keens-Douglas alone on stage for a full stand up session featuring his comic genius. Tanti Merle at de Oval and a host of other stories and humorous musings about Trini culture and society drew wave after wave of thunderous laughter and applause from the audience. In his final appearance at the Village he collaborated with well-known voices such as John Lyons, Eintou Pearl Springer, Fawzia Kane, Faustin Charles and Ian Dieffenthaler in reading some of the works of Trinidad and Tobago's finest living Poets. 'I really enjoyed my London experience at the Culture Fest as I have not done shows in London for quite some time,' Keens Douglas said. His last visit to the capital was to do a 'special performance at Lords along with Derek Walcott and other well-known British writers paying tribute to Sir Gary Sobers at a fundraising dinner.'

As a Cultural icon, entertainer and social commentator Paul Keens-Douglas is very much in a class of his own. His concern for Trinidad and Tobago after her 50th anniversary of independence is that 'we don't keep changing for change sake. Each individual has to take responsibility for his own area.' These days he is a highly sought after conference presenter and after dinner speaker, regularly touring Caribbean and western countries, giving performances and lecturing with a focus on inter-personal and cross-cultural communication. He plans to produce and package the archives of material he has collected over the years to make them available to his fans. Performances in London, next summer are also on the schedule.

WRITING WITH MR. LOVELACE

The distinguished author Earl Lovelace who is a member of the Caribbean old guard of great writers, was the writer in residence at the Trinidad and Tobago Culture Fest.

His classic novels include "The Dragon Can't Dance", "Wine of Astonishment" and "The Schoolmaster". His latest, "Is Just a Movie" was enthusiastically reviewed by the Guardian newspaper (UK). The reviewer, Bernadine Evaristo, says, "Lovelace is bursting with things to say about this complex, heterogeneous society in the late 20th century. This he does with a flair that at its best reaches a soaring rhapsody."

Lovelace is one of the few



Caribbean writers who has never left his homeland. It may have cost him some international acclaim, but his writing remains truly Trinidadian. He has the voice of someone who in pointing out our failings, is willing to fully acknowledge his own lapses in judgement.

While his critiques are spot on, they never contain the patronising air of the expatriate.



This summer, Mr. Lovelace's UK based fans had a rare opportunity to attend a writers' workshop led by the experienced and talented man himself.

The programme also included an examination of his classic

text "The Dragon Can't Dance". This "uproarious and enduring exultation to Trinidad's Carnival traditions" has long been on high school reading lists for good reason as it deftly addresses universal issues in a completely Trinidadian context.

The culmination of Earl Lovelace's extended stay at the Trinidad and Tobago Culture Fest was the UK launch of his novel "Is Just a Movie".

In his decision to create a Trinidad and Tobago Culture Fest, His Excellency was adamant that it showcase the richness of our creative expression. Earl Lovelace is an exemplary example of the talent that Trinidad and Tobago has to offer the world.



LIMING ON D'AVENUE



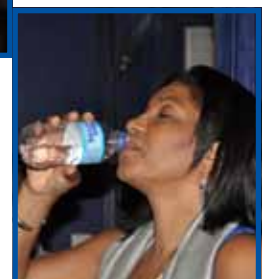
1st row: 3Canal; Ella Andall and Ken 'Professor' Philmore; Rajiv Shandilya TDC, Min. Vasant Bharat and H.E. Garvin Nicholas
2nd row: Earl Lovelace and Kevin leGendre; Eintou Springer and guests at D'Savannah; H.E. Garvin Nicholas and H.E. Mervyn Assam
3rd row: H.E. Garvin Nicholas at the TTHC All Fours Tournament; A mehndi arm tattoo; two very well dressed guests at the Culture Fest

AT THE CULTURE FEST **A BEER IS A CARIB**
AND



**ONLY
 BLUE
 WATERS
 WILL DO**

**Blue
 WATERS**



MATICOOR: A CELEBRATION OF WOMEN



A Maticoor is a very important part of the traditional Hindu wedding. The women of the wedding party come together to prepare the bride for married life.

At the Culture Fest our Maticoor night was a celebration of the key elements of a Maticoor.

It was a highly interactive show. There was a mehndi artist on-stage and audience members were invited up to have their hands decorated. They were also invited to come on-stage and dance, which they did.



ALL FOURS FEVER AT THE CULTURE FEST



His Excellency led the High Commission's team to a winning performance at the Mission's first ever "All Fours" Tournament at the Trinidad and Tobago Culture Fest on Saturday August 11th 2012.

The Mission competed against the North London All Fours Team, led by Mrs Elizabeth Ramlal.

COME, LEH WE DANCE

“

My spirit is music. My spirit is a drum. I just can't refuse it, It makes me feel so young

Dance (Ni Ta Wa)
Ella Andall

”



“

And this foot is mine.

Ah go jump if ah want to, wave up or bend down and wine..

This foot is mine.

Ah go stamp on de ground and, you cyar tell me what to do!

Bachannalist
Kerwin DuBois

”



“

I just want to dance with you.

A party over here now for two.

Cause I get this feeling that's so true

Whenever I'm dancin with you

Dance With You
Machel Montano

”

GOLD MEDAL WINNER FOUND



After taking gold for the men's javelin at the London 2012 Olympics, Keshorn Walcott spent some time at the Culture Fest

T&T'S FLAG GOES UP AT THE LONDON 2012 OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES



Ken McKell and delegates at the flag raising ceremony for the London 2012 Paralympic Games



H.E. Garvin Nicholas and Dr. Alcála under the Olympic Rings



Annette Knott, TTOC Chef de Mission exchanging gifts at the flag raising for the Olympic Games



**Let us celebrate
how far we've come!**



**Western Union congratulates
Trinidad and Tobago on 50 years of Independence.**



**WESTERN
UNION**

moving money for better

THREE TRINIDAD SISTERS

Anton Chekhov's classic play *Three Sisters* was born because he wondered about the lives of the Brontë sisters. Yet his finished work is set in early 19th century Russia, instead of Yorkshire. A fact that perhaps makes its easy adaptation to pre-World War I Trinidad much less shocking since the cavern between the book's inspiration and Chekhov's incarnation was so vast, yet works so well.

This particular production deals with the matter of middle-class alienation and a longing for that which no longer exists. As a rehearsed reading there is the potential that a lack of a set could prove too distracting for the audience. Under lesser hands it could prove too difficult for the audience to suspend the necessary disbelief required to truly engage with the characters.

Not so in this case. These 3 women could actually be sisters. Not simply because of their looks. Their interaction on stage was completely natural. All credit to Martina Laird, Indra Ové and Renee Castle for making us believe.



DR MARGERET BUSBY TALKS C.L.R. JAMES

Dr. Margeret Busby shared her expertise and unrivalled knowledge of C.L.R. James; the man and his work during a seminar at the Culture Fest.

Dr. Busby discussed James' seminal work *Beyond a Boundary*. She also read from his novel *Minty Alley* and invited others to talk about James' work and impact.



MASS CARIB



Mass Carib is Felix Cross' musical arrangement of the full mass.

This version draws on historical, cultural and spiritual references from the Caribbean, specifically from Trinidad and Tobago.

Sung in Latin, English, French Patois and Yoruba. The mass covers the linguistic influences of the Caribbean.

Felix Cross, who was recently awarded an OBE for services to music, wrote arrangements for choir, soloists, percussion and steel pan.

Mass Carib was performed at the Trinidad and Tobago Culture Fest on Wednesday 22nd August.

The rare live performance was warmly received by the audience.

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO THROUGH A LENS



The National Archives the official holder of records from the UK Colonial Office presented the workshop, "Trinidad and Tobago Through a Lens" at the November Nationals' Meeting at the High Commission.

They presented a series of photographs of pre-Independence Trinidad and Tobago to our nationals for help with tracing their social context.

INTER-FAITH SERVICE

The Trinidad and Tobago High Commission's annual Independence Thanksgiving Service took place at the St. Paul's Church in Knightsbridge on the 8th of September, 2012.

This year the service took on a special significance because of our Independence Jubilee. It was therefore most fitting that the flag was borne by Warrant Officer Class 1 (W01) Grantley Dick, Trinidad and Tobago Cadet Force.



It was escorted into the church by John Medina, who has the honour of escorting our young flag at Westminster Abbey for the first time in 1962.

This year His Excellency asked that all of the reading at the Inter-Faith Service be done by young people. At 50th Trinidad and Tobago is still a young country and its future is the responsibility of our youth. The High Commissioner felt that it was important that we seek

to include them in our nation building activities.

Therefore we had Natasha Carke representing the Spiritual Baptist community, Adem Zein Chany of the Moslem community



and Lomas Persad of the Hindu faith.

There were musical performances by tenor Ronald Samm, Alexander D'Great and the London Adventist Chorale.

Rohini Kumar performed a tribute to Lord Ganesh in dance and drummer Kent James and the Ebony Steelband provided musical accompaniment.



GALA DINNER AND AWARDS CEREMONY

At 50 years young Trinidad and Tobago has produced some of the most talented persons the world has ever seen.

Therefore the High Commission had the happy challenge of selecting some of our best and brightest to be signaled out for their stellar work in the arts, governance, business and sport.



The Gala Awards Ceremony was held at the Royal Garden Hotel, Kensington, London. Awardees and their guests were treated to a 5-star, three course meal that blended Caribbean flavours with a European sensibility.

Guests were treated to a special performance by Operatic tenor Neil Lutchman, which included a surprise duet with his talented son.



AFTER GALA SPECIAL PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

Unfortunately some of our awardees were unable to attend the Gala Dinner and Awards Ceremony. They were treated to a special awards presentation in His Excellency's office. They were Suresh Rambaran, CSI Steelband, Greta Mendez and Sterling Betancourt.



A REAL TRINI CHRISTMAS IN LONDON

On a traditionally cold December day in London, His Excellency Garvin Nicholas gave London a small taste of Christmas as we know it in sunny Trinidad and Tobago. Some 300 persons including diplomats, business persons, prominent members of the Diaspora and the High Commission's staff attended the High Commissioner's annual Christmas reception on Saturday, December 1st at his official residence in Hampstead.

In a show of true Trinbagonian hospitality, displaying the warmth of the twin-island State, His Excellency and his wife Dr. Nicola Alcála, prepared the Trini Christmas essentials of sorrel and punch de crème for the guests who were welcomed into their home to the sight of a stunning Christmas tree before being led to the heated garden marquee that was resplendent with lights and magnificently red poinsettias.

In his address to guests His Excellency reviewed the year, highlighting the country's 50th anniversary of independence. Drawing reference to bpTT's recent find of one trillion cubic feet of natural gas, H.E. Nicholas cautioned that the discovery should not make us lose sight of our commitment to economic diversification.

"Diversity is Trinidad and Tobago's real gift. We have one of the most multi-cultural societies in the world, where every creed and race does, in fact, find an equal place. It follows that we should take our own lead and work towards

developing our non-energy sectors in a bid to improve our economic diversity."

For the evening's entertainment, the High Commissioner gave the invitees an opportunity to enjoy the Christmas music of Trinidad and Tobago in the form of Robert Cardenas and his parang band.

The Trini experience was complete with the sweet music of the steelpan when Samuel DuBois and his accompanists were invited to perform their renditions of Christmas carols on pan.

The evening was clearly enjoyed by all as guests socialised while partaking of the culinary delights available.

The reception undoubtedly presented a great networking opportunity as there were official representatives from every continent inclusive of Japan and the USA being testament to the high regard in which Trinidad Tobago is held by the diplomatic community. They include but are not limited to the Dean of the Diplomatic Coup H.E. Khaled Al-Duwaisan GCV O who is the Ambassador for Kuwait, the Ambassador for Honduras, the High Commissioners of

Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, India, Jamaica, Mauritius, Sri Lanka and Swaziland.

Also in attendance were representatives from the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, members of the House of Commons, the House of Lords and other international Institutions. BP's Robert Riley, Baroness Floella Benjamin and the actor Rudolph Walker were observed mingling among the crowd.

His Excellency received much appreciation for being the host of such a fine reception. Guests were reluctant to leave the Trini warmth to return to the cold winter evening in London, clearly attesting to the claim that "A Trini Christmas is de best"!



THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO



Prime Minister

Kamla Persad-Bissessar SC, MP

Minister of National Security
Jack Warner, M.P

Attorney General
Senator Anand Ramlogan

Minister of Legal Affairs
Prakash Ramadhar, M.P

Minister of the People and Social Development
Dr. Glenn Ramadharsingh, M.P

Minister in the Ministry of the People and Social Development
Vernella Alleyne-Toppin, M.P

Minister of Education
Dr. Tim Gopeesingh, M.P

Minister of Housing, Land and Marine Affairs
Dr. Roodal Moonilal, M.P

Minister of Gender, Youth and Child Development
Marlene Coudray

Minister of Justice
Christlyn Moore

Minister of Public Administration
Carolyn Seepersad-Bachan, M.P

Minister of Transport
Chandresh Sharma, M.P.

Minister of Labour & Small & Micro Enterprise Dev't
Errol McLeod, M.P

Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs
Senator Kevin Ramnarine

Minister of Sport
Anil Roberts, M.P

Minister of Planning and Sustainable Development
Sen. Dr. Bhoendradatt Tiwarie

Minister of Public Utilities
Nizam Baksh, M.P

Minister of Tobago Development
Dr. Delmon Baker, M.P

Minister of Local Government
Dr. Surujrattan Rambachan, M.P

Minister in the Ministry of Local Government
Rudranath Indarsingh, M.P

Minister of Works and Infrastructure
Senator Emmanuel George

Minister of State in the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure Stacy Roopnarine, M.P

Minister of the Arts and Multiculturalism
Dr. Lincoln Douglas, M.P

Minister of Health
Dr. Fuad Khan M.P

Minister of State in the Office of the Prime Minister
Rodger Samuel, M.P

Minister of Tertiary Education and Skills Training
Senator Fazal Karim

Minister of Tourism
Stephen Cadiz, M.P

Minister of Community Development
Winston Peters, M.P

Minister of Food Production
Sen. Devant Maharaj

Minister of State in the Ministry of Food Production
Jairam Seemungal, MP

Minister of Science & Technology
Dr. Rupert Griffith

Minister of Foreign Affairs
Winston Dookeran, M.P

Minister of Trade, Industry & Investment
Sen. Vasant Bharath

Minister of the Environment & Water Resources
Ganga Singh

Minister of State in the Ministry of Environment & Water Resources
Ramona Ramdial, M.P

Minister of National Diversity & Social Integration
Clifton De Coteau

Minister in the Ministry of National Diversity & Social Integration
Senator Embau Moheni

Minister of Communication
Jamal Mohammed

Minister of Finance & The Economy
Larry Howai

Deputy Speaker
Nela Khan, M.P

